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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 000805

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR PRM, PRM/POP, PRM/ENA, PRM/ECA, AND PRM/PRP  
STATE FOR WHA, WHA/CCA, AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [PHUM](#) [CU](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: 20 GTMO CUBANS RESETTLED IN HONDURAS: ONLY 3  
REMAIN; IOM ASKS FOR PRM PERMISSION TO RE-PROGRAM MONEY

REF: STATE 64334

[11.](#) (U) This is an action request for PRM. Please see para. 7.

[12.](#) (SBU) PolOff met April 13 with International Organization of Migration (IOM) Tegucigalpa to discuss questions raised in reftel regarding the 20 Cubans resettled by IOM from Guantanamo to Tegucigalpa. According to the IOM, out of the original 20 GTMO Cubans resettled in Honduras, only three remain in country. The remaining 17 have left Honduras, with two of those (Raquel Gonzalez Salcedo and her son Carlos Javier Garcia Gonzalez) reportedly already in Miami. IOM said they knew this information because (a) only five Cubans collected their monthly stipends on April 7, and (b) from information directly from the migrants, who IOM has been in touch via cell phone.

[13.](#) (SBU) The Cubans left not because of problems in Honduras, where they have had work permission the entire time and have lived in rented houses in Tegucigalpa. The Cubans who have stayed have received official resident cards from Honduran Immigration, renewable on a yearly basis, and have applied for official work permission cards (to document the right to work that they have had since arrival).

[15.](#) (SBU) IOM believes that the Cubans left due to a desire to try to immigrate (illegally) to the U.S. Of the three remaining Cubans, IOM believes that only one, Gustavo Guerra Lopez, actually has real interest in staying in Honduras, where he is living with a Honduran girlfriend and is trying to get a job on a fishing boat out of Puerto Cortes. Another Cuban, Humberto Echevarria Herrera, is awaiting the arrival of his wife (scheduled to fly to Honduras from Cuba with the assistance of CIPRODEH, the local representative for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), on May 15). IOM believes that subsequent to her arrival the two will try to illegally immigrate to the U.S. The third remaining Cuban's plans are unclear, but IOM doubts he has any real intention of staying in Honduras for the long-term. (This same Cuban, Barbaro Antonio Vela Grego, was the recently mugged in Tegucigalpa, causing IOM to reimburse his stolen assistance money for the month of April. His wife and children are still in Cuba.)

[16.](#) (SBU) Due to the departure of the vast majority of the Cubans and the fact that assistance payments are paid on a monthly basis and were not paid in lump sums, if the remaining three Cubans stay in Honduras for a full six months, IOM estimates that it will have approximately USD 31,420.25 remaining from the original funds from the Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) at the end of the six months. IOM asked the Embassy to request permission from PRM to reprogram this money for other projects IOM conducts with Honduran Immigration. Post is forwarding to PRM via e-mail the MS Excel spreadsheet with details on how the money has been spent.

[17.](#) (SBU) Action request for PRM: Post requests PRM approval for IOM Tegucigalpa's request to reprogram the approximately USD 31,420.25 of remaining funds for the GTMO Cubans at the end of six months to be used for other projects with Honduran Immigration. Post strongly supports this request, and specifically believes that the money would be put to excellent use to support the Centers for Returned Migrants, a project previously funded by PRM via IOM. IOM and Honduran Immigration have been seeking funding for this worthy project, which puts a humane face on the massive numbers of Hondurans deported from the U.S., as it is not being included in Honduran Immigration's budget until CY06. Post thanks PRM for consideration of this request.  
Palmer